



Fit For Life in Christ

An Adult Catechism by:
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This is a modified version of the *Fit for Life Curriculum*. Additions or changes in wording to the original are noted with an asterisk (*).

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Lesson 1: Fit for Life through Jesus Our Savior (Part 1)

I. Jesus came to _____ us.

A. In God's original plan, all things were _____ (Genesis 1:31).

1. Man and woman were originally made in the _____ of God and were "*fit for life*" with him (Genesis 1:27, Ephesians 4:24).*
2. We fell from God as our Creator, but a choice is not _____. (**Genesis 1-3**)*
3. True freedom is _____ as God's creature, not living as something else.*

B. The _____ of man into sin corrupted the world and everything in it.

1. Relationships were _____ (Genesis 3:12).
2. Creation was _____ (Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:20-21).
3. Man's fall was complete. We _____ a Savior. Jesus was the human being we can't be.*

II. Jesus' coming was _____ - natural (Matthew 1:18f).

A. Jesus is true _____ through the virgin birth (John 1:14, Matthew 1:22-23)

1. He grew in _____ and stature (Luke 2:52).
2. He had _____ (Matthew 13:55-56).
3. He was hungry (Mt. 4:2), thirsty (John 19:28), had a real body (Luke 24:39), he suffered temptation (Hebrews 4:15), he had human emotions (John 11:35, Mark 3:5).

B. Jesus is true _____, with the Father and the Holy Spirit (John 10:30).

1. He is _____ (John 8:58-59).
2. He is _____ (Colossians 1:16-17)!
3. He has the authority to take responsibility for the sins
_____ (Matthew 28:28, Romans 8:3-4, John
5:25-26).

C. The Names of Jesus reveal His _____ and _____.

1. Jesus Christ ___ John Smith
2. “Jesus” is his _____ name selected by God Himself
(Matthew 1:21). It means “_____.” Jesus is man’s only
Savior (Acts 4:12).
3. “Christ” is the official _____ of the Savior. It means “The
_____” or “Chosen One” (Acts 10:37-38).

III. Jesus Suffered and Died _____. (Hebrews 2:14-18)

A. He suffered under _____. (John 18-19)

B. He suffered under the _____ system.

C. Jesus suffered the death of _____.

1. Crucifixion was the death sentence of a
_____.
2. It was a slow death (2 to 4 days) used by Romans as a
_____ to crime.
3. No one took Jesus' life. He " _____ " His Spirit
(Matthew 27:50, John 10:18).

D. Jesus' greatest suffering was the "Suffering of His Soul" - the _____ from God the Father that He endured for you. (Isaiah 53, Matthew 27:46)

E. Jesus' suffering for the sins of the world came to an end when He cried, "It is _____." (John 19:30)

Lesson 2: Fit for Life through Jesus Our Savior (Part 2)

- I. Jesus _____ from the dead.
 - A. The _____ of the resurrection is great.
 1. The tomb was _____ (John 20:3-7).
 2. The _____ was rolled away (Luke 24:2).
 3. Many _____ saw the resurrected Jesus (1 Cor. 15:3-6).
 4. Sources _____ the Bible support the Gospel accounts.
 5. The explosive growth of a religion based on a _____ man cannot be explained without the resurrection (Deuteronomy 21:23, Galatians 3:13).
 6. The _____ lives of the disciples can't be explained without the resurrection (Acts 5:27-32).
 - B. If Christ has not been raised then our _____ is in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:14-19).
- II. Jesus is the _____ way to eternal life (Acts 4:12).*
 - A. The claims of Jesus force you to name Him either _____, _____, or _____ (John 14:6).
 - B. In a sense, there are only two religions in the world: _____ and _____ (Romans 3:21-24).
 - C. Jesus fulfills man's original commission: to have _____ as the image-bearer of God. (**Genesis 1:26-28, Colossians 1:15-20**)*
- III. Jesus _____ to the right hand of God (Romans 8:34).
 - A. After he had spent 40 days on earth.

1. To _____ his disciples that He was really alive (Luke 24:25,44f).
2. To give them _____ about the kingdom of God and their mission in it (Acts 1:3-8).

B. The right hand of God is the _____ of God: Jesus is Lord of creation and the cosmos. (Ephesians 1:19-23).*

C. Jesus at God's right hand is _____ power (Hebrews 10:1-25)!

1. Jesus intercedes for us (Romans 8:34).
2. Nothing more _____ to be done (He sat down)...until the resurrection on the last day!*
3. We can boldly approach God in Christ.

IV. Jesus will return to _____ the living and the dead (Acts 10:42, Romans 14:10).

A. The Final Judgment is not an _____ (John 3:18, 2 Timothy 2:19).

1. The entrance requirement of heaven is always and only _____ in Christ (John 6:40, Romans 3:28).
2. Believers in Jesus have no need to _____ the day of judgment (1 John 4:16-18, Romans 8:1).

B. What happens to the soul after Death?

1. The soul is not absorbed into the essence of God like a drop of water in a lake, but continues to exist as a distinct _____ entity. (Luke 23:43)*
2. The souls of believers are " _____ " (Luke 23:43, Philippians 1:23).

3. The souls of unbelievers are in _____.
 - a) Hell is a real place originally created for _____ and other fallen angels (Matthew 25:41).
 - b) It is a place of eternal punishment and _____ (Matthew 13:49-50).
 - c) There is nothing " _____ " about ignoring this doctrine (Ezekiel 3:18-19).
4. The Bible forbids us from trying to establish contact with the _____ (Deuteronomy 18:10-12).
5. The Bible says nothing about a place like _____. Believers receive eternal life when they die, not a place of punishment (Luke 23:43, John 3:18,5:24; 6:47, etc.)

C. The signs of Christ's coming are there to remind us that it could come _____ (Matthew 24:1-14,42-44).

1. False Messiahs/prophets
2. Wars
3. Famines/Earthquakes
4. Persecution of Christians
5. Loss of faith/love
6. The preaching of the Gospel in the whole world

D. God will create a new heaven and a new earth, free of the _____ against sin (Revelation 21:1, Romans 8:21, Revelation 22:3).

1. Christianity is not an _____ plan.*
2. Christianity is an _____ Kingdom.*

E. At the Last Day judgment will be pronounced on the _____ of the dead (John 5:28-29). They will be reunited with their souls in heaven (new earth) or hell (Acts 24:15).*

1. We believe in the second _____, not the second going!*

2. Neither _____, _____, nor _____ will stop this reunion (Job 19:25-27).
3. Our new bodies will be _____ (Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:35f).
4. We will be perfectly _____ (Revelation 21:4, Isaiah 33:24).
5. We will never ____ again (1 Corinthians 15:53, 2 Cor. 5:4).
6. We will never _____ for anything (Revelation 7:16).
7. We will never get _____ (1 Peter 1:3-5).
8. All our _____ will be answered (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Lesson 3: Fit for Life through God the Father

- I. Believing in God means more than believing that He _____ (James 2:10), it means believing what He says about _____ (Exodus 20:3, Isaiah 45:18-19).
- II. God is the _____ Almighty. (Ephesians 5:22-33, Matthew 6:9, John 20:17)*
- III. God is the _____ Creator of heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1f; Hebrews 11:3).
 - A. God's creation is _____.*
 1. Gnosticism says _____ is bad, but Christianity says it's good.*
 2. God so loved the world he gave it _____ to rule it in God's image!*
 3. Man's original "great commission" was to be _____ and multiply and to have _____ over creation just like God would.*
- IV. The Ten Commandments help paint a picture of God's _____ for an ideal world. Each of the Commandments acts as a "fence" protecting an institution of God's good creation.*
 - A. The 1st Commandment is a "fence" protecting the institution of knowing the right _____: "*You shall have no other gods.*"*
 1. A _____ is something we trust in to give us everything good we have.*
 2. _____ is confusing the creator with his creation.*
 3. We _____ God because we should take him seriously as Creator, Lord, and Judge! That's scary!

4. We ____ God because we cherish his word and commandments above all things, devoting our lives to them.
5. We ____ God because we should rely on him to take care of us. God uses things and people as a means to care for us.

B. The 2nd Commandment is a “fence” protecting the institution of knowing our Creator’s _____: *“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.”**

1. God gives us his name so that we know who _____ and _____ us.*
2. Because God’s name has meaning, we don’t use it meaninglessly or as a “_____.”*
3. Because God’s name means God works in certain ways (like salvation), we don’t try to _____ God into working in a different way, like in sorcery, magic charms, or to curse people.*
4. Because we belong to God, we ____ his name.*

C. The 3rd Commandment is a “fence” protecting the institution of _____ in God’s creation and redemption: *“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”**

1. Sabbath is a day of rest to appreciate the goodness of God’s _____. (Exodus 20:8-11)*
2. Sabbath is a time of rest to appreciate God’s work of _____. (Deuteronomy 5:12-15)*
3. _____ is our true Sabbath!*

D. The 4th Commandment is a “fence” protecting the institution of _____: *“Honor your father and your mother.”**

1. As Christians, we see parents as God's _____ on earth.*
 - a) They literally give us life!*
 - b) Parents also keep us alive, show us how to live in the world, protect us from evil, and teach us about God.*
 - c) If parents were perfect, God wouldn't have to tell us to treat them with honor.*
 - d) This Commandment requires that parents act honorably as God's representatives!*

2. We honor _____ authority that God puts over us.*
 - a) God puts all of these leaders in place to see that the world is taken care of and protected from evil.*
 - b) We disobey them if they exceed the limits of their God-given authority by requiring us to disobey God's Word.*

E. The 5th Commandment is a “fence” protecting the institution of _____: *“You shall not murder.”**

1. God creates, protects, and preserves all life. He calls us likewise to be caring and compassionate to all _____, too.*
2. God created us to care about other people and to help them in their times of _____.*
3. We obey the 5th Commandment by not _____ our neighbor.*
 - a) Engaging in reckless and unhealthy behaviors, like substance abuse*
 - b) Expressing hatred, prejudice, racism, sexism, and the like*
 - c) Acting violently or abusively toward a spouse, child, sibling, or others*
 - d) Killing ourselves or seeking help in killing ourselves*

e) Aborting an unborn child*

F. The 6th Commandment is a “fence” protecting the institution of _____: “*You shall not commit adultery.*”*

1. In the beginning, God made us _____ and _____.*
 - a) Adam and Eve bear the image of God *together*.*
 - b) Adam and Eve are equal; equal in dignity, status, and value, but also different. (And it’s good!)*
 - c) Adam is head, Eve is helper.*
 - d) The idea of marriage is that husband and wife form a super-powered world-saving team! They complete each other. (**Compl~~e~~mentarianism**)*
2. Marriage is a _____ union of man and woman who _____ to take care of each other no matter what.*
 - a) They get to have kids and care for the world in their unique jobs together.*
 - b) It starts with a public promise, a commitment to live together faithfully for the rest of their lives.*
3. _____ at its core is unfaithfulness of someone who engages in or desires sex with someone to whom he or she is not married.*
 - a) This can happen before marriage!*
 - b) Sex outside of marriage fails to respect the institution of marriage.*
4. We respect God’s institution of marriage by treating our bodies (and others’ bodies) as _____, not as _____ that serve our selfish desires.*
 - a) We break this by treating the human body as if it was not meant for the purpose of marriage. (Examples: fornication, rape, pornography, incest, sexual abuse, homosexuality)*

b) We speak and act in ways that build up each other as men and women, we reserve sex for marriage rather than before or outside marriage, we refrain from lust of any kind (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, etc.), and we treasure our spouse as a gift from God.*

5. _____ is okay!*

- a) We are caretakers of creation, single or married.*
- b) Singles have gifts that married couples don't!*

6. _____ is wrong.*

- a) It's a result of the fall.*
- b) It's not to be taken lightly. It is not permitted for lazy, selfish reasons. Divorce is not permitted if the reason is "we're just not in love."*
- c) Divorce tears apart what God intends to be a lifelong union.*
- d) Divorce is permitted (but still tragic) for adultery, abandonment, and abuse.*

7. There is always _____.*

G. The 7th Commandment is a "fence" protecting the institution of _____: "*You shall not steal.*"*

- 1. God gives us everyday necessities and even frivolities out of _____ for us.*
- 2. We _____ in and look after all the stuff that God gives us and our neighbor that supports earthly life.*
- 3. We obey this commandment by not _____ or holding back God's earthly gifts for our neighbor.*

- a) We don't steal our neighbor's possessions and money; we aren't lazy or sloppy when we work.*
 - b) We don't get stuff dishonestly, by fraud, by cheating, or by taking advantage of others so they miss out on opportunity.*
4. We obey this commandment by _____ our neighbor's stuff for them for their well-being.*
 5. We try to protect and even _____ our neighbor's possessions, their income, and their livelihood!*
 6. We should use the stuff God gives us _____.*
 - a) So that our family flourishes (Shelter, food, education, healthcare, etc.)*
 - b) So that others (especially the poor) flourish by what we give to charity (Home, church, as neighbors, and as citizens)*
 - c) So that all of creation flourishes by our responsible care of land, water, and air.*

H. The 8th Commandment is a “fence” protecting the institution of your _____: *“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.”**

1. God gives us the right to a good name and reputation so that we can enjoy the _____ and _____ of others and live in a good and friendly society.*
2. So, we try to _____ the reputation of others so that people may think well of our neighbors.*
3. We obey this commandment by not _____ about others in a way that would harm them.*
 - a) Including telling lies about our neighbors*

- b) Betraying them by making their private faults or secrets public*
 - c) Slandering our neighbors by complaining or spreading rumors about them*
4. Instead, we speak _____ about others, our family, friends, enemies, and neighbors.*
- a) This means defending our neighbors when others speak badly about them*
 - b) This means we try to draw attention to our neighbor's good qualities and deeds*
 - c) This means we explain our neighbors actions (even when they're questionable and seem bad) in the nicest way possible and put the best construction on them, giving them the benefit of the doubt.*
5. Are there times when not telling the truth is necessary? Yes!
Exodus 1:15-20...*

I. The 9th and 10th Commandments are “fences” protecting the institution of _____: *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”**

- 1. Contentment is a gift from God! Being content means we can live without always feeling like we _____ something.*
- 2. We break this commandment when we _____.*
 - a) When we desire in our hearts to make what belongs to our neighbor belong to us.*
 - b) When we desire to make anyone (people or animals) have a better relationship with us than with the neighbor who already has a relationship with them.*

c) This means we don't try and get something that belongs to our neighbor in a way that appears okay and like it's not stealing (when we know it really is).*

3. So instead, we obey this commandment by being _____ with what God gives us and who God puts in our life.*

4. It's not _____ to want or need things.*

a) God encourages us to seek his blessings for food, shelter, good jobs, health, and success.*

b) It becomes sinful when that desire leads us to be ungrateful for what we already have and unsatisfied with what God give us.*

5. This Commandment is the hardest to keep because it shows us sin is a _____ issue.*

V. _____ is a *theodicy*. A theodicy asks:*

A. Is God really _____?*

B. Is God really _____?*

C. Does _____ really exist?*

VI. Evolution is bad for _____ (Romans 1:18-19)

A. Human life is not _____.

B. _____ is a natural outcome.

C. _____ is expected. (Acts 17:26, Colossians 3:11)

D. _____ is excused (Romans 1:28-32).

VII. _____ stands firmly behind the entire Genesis account (Matthew 19:4, Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 16:29-31).

- VIII. What does it _____ that God is our maker?
- A. We are not _____.
 - B. Life has a _____.
 - C. We are _____ to God.
 - D. We are _____ by God.
 - E. He will _____ his creation.*

*For more on evolution, consult the appendix, "Evolution Is Bad Science."

Lesson 4: Fit for Life through God the Holy Spirit and the Word

I. The Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son.

A. The Bible teaches that there is only _____ God (Deuteronomy 6:4).

B. The Bible also teaches that there are three distinct _____ in that one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

Heresy	Description
	Belief that Jesus was born as a mere (non-divine) man, was supremely virtuous and that he was adopted later as "Son of God" by the descent of the Spirit on him.
	Holy Spirit and Jesus are creations of the Father.
	The 3 persons are 3 distinct parts of God, the 3 of which make God whole and are not fully God on their own; each are $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Divine.
	Belief that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three characterizations of one God, rather than three distinct "persons" in one God.

C. Each Person of the _____ is fully God, yet there are not three gods but one God (1 Corinthians 8:6, John 14:26).

D. Human _____ can reach the conclusion that there must be a god who made the world (Romans 1:20).

E. That God is _____ is only revealed through His _____ (Psalm 119:130).

II. The Holy Spirit _____ in our hearts (1 Corinthians 12:3).

A. Even our faith is a _____ of God (Ephesians 2:8, 1 Cor. 2:5).

1. Faith _____ what has already been done for us by Christ. It is not our work, but God's (2 Timothy 1:9).

2. There is a difference between faith and _____ (1 John 3:20).

B. The Holy Spirit _____ our faith, as we remain in God's Word (Ephesians 3:16).

C. He helps us _____ the truths of God (1 Corinthians 2:12,14).

D. He helps us _____ the truths of God (Mark 13:11).

III. The Holy Spirit _____ within us (1 Corinthians 3:16).

A. The Holy Spirit helps us bear _____ for Christ (Galatians 5:22-23).

B. The Holy Spirit equips us with _____ for Christ's service (Romans 12:4-8).

C. We are all given _____ gifts (Romans 12:6)

D. Our gifts are meant to be used for _____.
(1 Corinthians 12:7)

E. The Holy Spirit knows what He's doing when he distributes His gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11).

IV. The Holy Spirit _____ for us as we pray (Romans 8:26).

V. The Holy Spirit brings us God's Word.

A. God's Word is not _____ the Bible.*

B. God's Word is _____. (John 1)*

C. God's Word is the gospel (good news) about Jesus and His story of _____.*

D. The Bible is God's _____ Word.*

VI. God's Word is a word of _____ (Mark 1:21-27).

A. It _____ (Genesis 1).

B. It _____ (Romans 10:17).

C. It _____ (James 1:21).

VII. The Bible ___ God's Word!

A. There are different writers, but _____ (2 Timothy 3:16).

1. God's Word was _____ by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21).

2. God worked through men and _____ them what they were to write (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

3. The two _____ testify to the same Savior (Ephesians 2:20).

B. God's Word is _____ story.*

1. _____: God creates everything perfect!*

2. _____: Sin enters the world.*

3. _____: God chooses a people to be *his*, and promises a Savior through them (Israel).*

4. _____: God's Word made flesh, comes from Israel, for *everyone*.*

5. _____: Jesus teaches, shows His power, points us back to God, dies to bring us salvation, and rises again as King of everything, still reigning from Heaven.*

6. _____: God joins us together as His Chosen people, called the church.*

7. _____: Jesus will return to bring about our resurrection and new Earth.*

VIII. God's Word is _____.

- A. The books the Christian Church considered sacred were called the _____.
- B. Jesus recognized the divine _____ of the Old Testament (Matthew 4:4-10; 5:17-18; John 10:35) and promised the reliability of the New Testament (John 14:26).
- C. The Bible writers were brutally _____ historians.
- D. The Bible has been _____ accurately through the years (Isaiah 40:8).

IX. God's Word is _____.

- A. It _____ us in history and before God; it places us in God's story.*
- B. It reveals man's _____ (Ephesians 2:3, Galatians 5:17).
- C. It warns of the _____ of bad behavior (Proverbs 5:3-6).
- D. It satisfies man's deepest _____ (Acts 13:38).

X. God's Word in _____ words.

- A. The Bible was first written in _____ and _____.
- B. The Bibles we read today are _____.
- C. The "New World" Version is a deliberate _____-translation of the actual texts.
- D. God's Word _____ (Jeremiah 23:25-31).

XI. What about direct revelations from God today?

- A. God has bound His church to the _____ word (Joshua 23:6, Ephesians 2:20).
- B. In these "last days" Jesus is the _____ of all of God's revelations (Hebrews 1:1-2).
- XII. _____ and _____ help you get a "handle" on the Bible.

Law	Gospel
_____	_____
_____	_____
S.O.S _____	S.O.S _____
_____	_____

- A. The _____ of God's Word is to make you fit for life. (John 20:30-31)
- B. God calls us to live _____ in the Law and in the Gospel.*
1. The Law tells you _____ to do (God's will for you).*
 2. Legalism tells you _____ to do it. You have freedom in how to do God's will! *
 3. The gospel does not _____ the Law. The Law is _____.*
 4. The gospel is that Jesus _____ us to God's Law and design.*

Lesson 5: Fit for Life through the Means of Grace

- I. Without the Grace of God we are ____ (Luke 19:10).
 - A. We are spiritually ____ (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
 - B. We are spiritually ____ (1 John 5:12).
 - C. We are by nature _____ of God (Romans 5:10).

- II. God chose to bring His grace to us through _____.
 - A. The Word of God is a means of Grace.
 1. Jesus stands behind the power of the Word to _____ (Luke 24:47).
 2. The Word of God creates ____ (Romans 10:17).
 3. The Word of God brings _____ (Romans 1:16).
 - B. Baptism is a means of grace.
 1. It is a birth _____ (John 3:1-8)
 2. It is _____ by our Lord Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20).
 3. In Baptism, God's Word of forgiveness becomes a _____ word (1 Peter 3:21).
 4. The blessings of baptism are given to all who _____ (Mark 16:16).
 - a) Our sins are _____ (Acts 22:16).
 - b) We receive the _____ (Acts 2:38).
 - c) We are _____ with Christ (Galatians 3:27).
 - d) We are _____ into God's family (Ephesians 4:4-6).

5. The Church administers baptism through called pastors for the sake of _____ in the Church. In emergencies any Christian can and should baptize.
6. Whoever believes in Jesus _____ eternal life (John 3:36), but anyone who believes in Him will obey His command and _____ to be baptized (Acts 8:35f).
7. Infant baptism was the accepted practice of the early church.
 - a) In the New Testament, baptism is directly connected to the Old Testament covenant of _____ (Colossians 2:11-13).
 - b) It was the practice of the Apostles to baptize whole _____ (Acts 16:15, 33; 1 Corinthians 1:16).
8. Arguments against infant baptism do not stand up to what the Bible actually says.
 - a) Jesus says "little ones" can _____ in Him (Matthew 18:6, Mark 10:13-16).
 - b) Sin is not just a _____ problem, but a _____ problem for all of us (Psalm 51:5).
 - c) The Bible says that the blessings of baptism are there for you _____ your children (Acts 2:38-39).
 - d) We are commanded to baptize all nations (Matthew 28:19).
9. Baptism is not a _____ (Matthew 28:20).

C. The Lord's Supper is a means of Grace.

1. Jesus instituted what we know as The Lord's Supper in the context of the _____ meal (Exodus 12).

2. Jesus connected His Word of _____ to the elements of bread and wine (Matthew 26:26-28).
3. He declared that His Body and Blood are _____ in the bread and wine for us to eat and drink (Mat. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25).
4. How this can be is a mystery that we embrace rather than say _____ than or _____ than what the Bible says.
5. In the Lord's Supper, as in Baptism, God's Word of forgiveness becomes a _____ word for you personally (John 6:55-56).
6. The Bible expects Christians to observe the Lord's Supper _____. (1 Corinthians 11:26; Luke 22:19).
7. There are some Biblical reasons that might keep someone from the Lord's Supper:
 - a) Unwillingness to _____ and lead a godly life (1 John 1:10).
 - b) Unwillingness to _____ (Matthew 18:21-35).
 - c) Failure to recognize that Christ's Body and Blood _____ in the bread and wine for you (1 Corinthians 11:29).
 - d) If someone is not prepared to _____ himself (1 Corinthians 11:28).
 - e) We must be _____ to take Communion, and we must do so with others _____. (1 Corinthians 11)*
8. We thank and praise our Savior, Who knows how important it is for us to have these external means to experience his grace and forgiveness (John 2:25)!

Lesson 6: Fit for Life in the Church

- I. The Christian church is a community of people Jesus has chosen to redeem for the _____.*

 - A. The task of the church is to be the presence and the proclaimer of the gospel in the _____.*
 - B. We do this by living according to God's _____ and _____; by receiving God's Word and Sacraments in worship and living them out in daily routine.*
 - C. We save the world by _____ the church!*
 - D. Why become a member?*
 1. Mutual accountability and opportunities for Christian growth*
 2. Joining a community of forgiveness*
 3. Joining a loving, accepting family*
 4. A place to put down roots*
 5. Support and celebration for all the chapters of life*
 - E. Member Expectations*
 1. Become baptized*
 2. Become educated in Luther's Small Catechism as a member of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod*
 3. Committed to spiritual growth through frequent worship attendance, Communion reception, and Bible study*
 4. Active participation in church community*
 5. Prayerful and financial support of congregation*

- II. There is a difference between the Church as we see it and the Church as God sees it (Ephesians 5:25-27).
 - A. The true Christian Church is _____ (Luke 17:20-21).
 1. It is made up of those who truly _____ in Jesus (Romans 10:9).

2. It is called the:

- a) _____ Christian Church (Ephesians 5:26-27).
- b) Communion of _____ (Romans 1:7).
- c) _____ of Christ (Romans 12:5).

B. The Church also has a _____ side.

- 1. The "visible" church is made up of those who become _____ of a Christian Church.
- 2. Unfortunately, not all members of Christian churches are _____ followers of Christ (2 Timothy 3:5).

C. Despite its faults, God still calls us into the Visible Church.

- 1. _____ the Body of Christ (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:12-20, 27)!
- 2. The Church helps you to _____ in faith (Ephesians 4:15).
- 3. The church is a spiritual hospital to provide _____ to its members (Galatians 6:2).
- 4. The church gives us opportunities to _____ God and our neighbor (1 Peter 4:10).
- 5. Through the Church we can fulfill Christ's command to go and make disciples of _____ (Matthew 28:19, Acts 1:8).
- 6. Jesus commands us to _____ confess Him to be our Lord and Savior (Matthew 10:32-33).

III. There are _____ in the church depending on how churches treat the Bible.

- A. Any time a Church says _____ than or _____ than the Bible differences will arise (Revelation 22:18-19).

- B. We are told to "hold firmly" to the Word, not _____ it so that it makes better sense to us (Titus 1:9).
- IV. The Church has a " _____ " ministry.
- A. By faith all Christians are royal _____ before God and are called to "declare His praises" (1 Peter 2:9).
- B. The Bible also makes a distinction between the priesthood of all believers and the _____ office instituted by God (Ephesians 4:11-13, Acts 20:28).
1. Paul describes the pastor as an _____ and the church as "God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9-10).
 2. The pastor as shepherd is held _____ for the spiritual welfare of the church (Ezekiel 33:7-9).
 3. The pastor is the "designated" _____ man.*
 4. The pastor is a keeper of the _____.*
 5. The _____ is also responsible for the physical and spiritual welfare of their pastor.
- V. The Church is called by God to _____ sins and to _____ sins (John 20:23).
- A. Sin is _____ not relative (Luke 16:17).
1. Sin _____ (Genesis 3:12).
 2. Sin _____ (James 1:15; 2 Samuel 11).
- B. God gave to His Church the ministry of _____ (Hebrews 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20).

1. The astounding truth of the Gospel is that Christ has already won forgiveness for ____ sins for ____ time, and heaven is truly unlocked to everyone (1 John 2:2).
2. The task God gave His Church was to urge everyone in the world to _____, _____ that forgiveness and be _____ to God (2 Corinthians 5:19-20).
3. Forgiveness is to be the _____ of a Christian. We even ask the Lord to forgive us "*as we forgive*" others (Matthew 6:14-15).
4. Sometimes Christians must _____ each other over sinful behavior (Hebrews 3:12-13).

VI. God has promised to _____ His Church until Christ returns (Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 2:20)

A. Until then, we are fully citizens of the Kingdom of _____ and the Kingdom of the _____. (Romans 13)*

B. As Christians, we don't claim _____ as a subculture of the world; instead, we use our privileges for our neighbor's benefit.*

1. The idea of "rights" is a claim to _____ and it demands value apart from the value we receive from God.*

2. "*I want to be part of a community with the habits and practices that will make me do what I would otherwise not choose to do and then to learn to like what I have been forced to do.*" - Stanley Hauerwas*

C. Jesus is Lord of the _____ and the _____. Christians live in both "realms."*

1. To think that the church is to be _____ the world (because the world is “bad”) is gnostic heresy that leads to “Christian” versions of everything.*
 2. As citizens of the world, we can _____ the world’s art and culture (responsibly) since it is *God’s* world! (Genesis 2)*
 3. Government strives for _____ while the church strives for _____ of the gospel in the fallen creation.*
 - a) We do not believe in separation of church and state, instead church and state should work in harmonious distinctinction, cooperating with each other without confusion.*
 - b) To confuse the two for “mutual benefit” ultimately undermines each institution’s God-given task.*
 - c) *“The space of the church is not there in order to fight with the world for a piece of its territory, but precisely to testify to the world that it is still the world, namely, that is loved and reconciled by God....The church can only defend its own space by fighting, not for space, but for the salvation of the world. Otherwise the church becomes a ‘religious society’ that fights in its own interest and thus has ceased to be the church of God in the world.” - Dietrich Bonhoeffer**
- D. As Christians, we don’t claim _____ as a subculture of the world; instead, we use our privileges for our neighbor’s benefit.*
- E. As citizens of the world, we can _____ the world’s art and culture (responsibly) since it is *God’s* world! (Genesis 2)*
- F. The church is a _____ of the coming Kingdom.*

- VII. Prayer is the church's way of putting our faith into _____. Jesus gives us the Lord's Prayer as a _____ for prayer.*
- A. The Introduction: *"Our Father who art in heaven."*
 God welcomes us with open arms so that we can always approach Him in complete _____ as our dear Father on account of Christ, our brother.*
- B. The First Petition: *"Hallowed be Thy name."*
 We _____ God's name as Father when we call on Him in faith, proclaim His love for us, and live according to His Word.*
- C. The Second Petition: *"Thy kingdom come."*
 We believe and confess that Christ's present (but hidden) _____ as King is being extended by the Spirit through the Gospel. It will be fully revealed when Christ returns in glory.*
- D. The Third Petition: *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*
 We pray that God would not allow any _____ to stand in the way of His gracious will—namely, that His Word and kingdom be extended.*
- E. The Fourth Petition: *"Give us this day our daily bread."*
 We pray that we might be grateful for everything (however ordinary) that God provides each day for our _____ life.*
- F. The Fifth Petition: *"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."*
 We pray that for Christ's sake we may know the _____ of being forgiven and forgiving others.*
- G. The Sixth Petition: *"And lead us not into temptation."*
 We pray that our Father would keep us strong in His Word, since our faith is under constant _____.*

H. The Seventh Petition: *“But deliver us from evil.”*

We pray that God would _____ us from the evil one both now and forever.*

I. The Conclusion: *“For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.”*

We joyfully confess that our Father is _____ to do all that we ask in these petitions.*

Appendix: Evolution Is Bad Science

In Genesis 1 the Hebrew for “In the Beginning” means, “before anything else ‘was.’” At one point nothing existed except for God. So it's true that we begin with the assumption that God made heaven and earth, that He is the “uncreated Creator.” The evolutionist also begins with an assumption, right? The assumption that God does not exist and that life must have evolved on it's own by some kind of cosmic accident.

Either Matter Always Existed Or At Some Point It Was Created

Try to think of nothing. I dare you. Think of nothing - no-thing... No tables, no chairs, no church pew, no life, no planet, no stars, nothing. It's impossible, isn't it? We just don't have a frame of reference for those kinds of thoughts. But when it comes to the cosmos, the stuff of the universe, you kind of have to think of that possibility. Because there are really only two answers to the question: “Where did stuff come from?” Either it came from nothing and suddenly became something, in other words, it had a beginning - or m stuff of the universe has always existed. And of course, both of those answers present problems. The first one is outside of our experience and it would require a supernatural answer, as we understand it, an Almighty God who spoke the universe into being. That is of course, by faith, exactly what we believe: *“By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”* (Hebrews II: 3 NIV) God said... And it was so. But what about the other option? What if the cosmos has always existed? It never had a beginning. It just always was. There really is just as big a problem with that theory - because it doesn't match the evidence of what we see in the universe. In fact...

If Matter Always Existed, The Universe Should Be Cold And Dead

If the stuff of the universe has been floating around forever and forever, all the usable energy would have been used up. Our sun and every other sun in the universe would have burned up, resulting in heat death. There would be no light, no heat, no life...

If Matter Was Created, The Universe Should Be Winding Down

That was one of the reasons that scientists developed the theory of the “Big Bang” for the origin of the universe. They see that the universe is expanding, the stars are burning out. They see that it is slowly dying as it uses up its energy and follows the Laws of thermodynamics. In other words, they see that it had a beginning, just as the Bible says.

Either Life Evolved, Or At Some Point It Was Created

Just as matter itself either always existed or at some point was created, so with life either it always existed or at some point we went from a no life state to a state in which DNA, the most complex information-producing vehicle known to man, suddenly existed and started creating life. So the two options for life are that it was created by an intelligent being like God, or it happened by accident, right? You can bring aliens into the picture, but it just puts off that conclusion. Consider the huge difference between these two models of the origin of life, and what the concept of evolution does to the Christian faith.

If Life Evolved, Then Man Is Rising And Didn't Fall Into Sin

Over the years Christians have been intimidated by the politically correct acceptance of evolution in our society, to the point where many try to make room for it somehow in the Bible. So people have speculated about a Theistic evolution in which God used the process of evolution to create, or they've

tried to create various gaps in the Genesis account to make room for millions of years and evolution. But just stop for a minute and think about what it means when you embrace a “monkeys to man” evolution.

Evolution as a model for the origin of life says that it took millions of years for human beings to rise up from the slime. Somewhere in the middle were the cavemen who were some sort of pre-human ancestor. Of course, the Bible teaches something completely different: that the Almighty God created man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. At that point man was as good as he ever got, and then fell and became alienated from God. Those two ideas could not be farther apart and they can't both be true. By the way, we certainly don't deny that there were cavemen. But let me just ask, who were cavemen?... Isn't it obvious? They were people who lived in caves! Do you realize that there are still many people who live in caves today? And some of them are pretty nice! For instance, at least 30,000,000 people live in caves today in China, for the very simple reason that they are warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The point is, cavemen weren't animals on their way up, they were simply humans who lived in caves. Some of them had not only lost their knowledge of God, but had also lost the sophistication of their ancestors. The deeper point is...

If Man Never Fell Into Sin Then He Has No Need For A Savior

See, where do we get the concept of sin? It comes from Genesis-remember? There is sin in the world today because Adam and Eve rebelled against God and ate the forbidden fruit, If there was not a real tree, a real garden, a real Adam and Eve... If it's all just a big story, then there's no real rebellion and there's no real fall, and there's no real sin in the world. And if that's true, then Jesus Christ died for nothing, and your faith is in vain. Do you see how critical this issue is? Christian people cannot logically work this theory into the Christian faith. There is no reason to believe in a Savior from sin if there was no real sin in the first place. In that case, if there is a God, then He's a monster because He let His Son die for nothing. The stakes in this debate could not be higher.

Evolution Is Bad Science

Folks, science is not a threat to the Christian faith. And this is not a battle between science and religion. It's between good science and bad science. Science is simply a study of the physical world: God's world. And a study of God's world should naturally lead to a discovery of its Creator and it does. In fact, the science is all against evolution as a model for the origin of life on earth.

It Must Break The Most Basic Scientific Laws

For instance, the Law of Biogenesis states that life always comes from living matter, never from something non-living. No living thing ever “spontaneously generates” from things that are not living. The odd thing is that all your biology textbooks will teach this as a scientific law but in the very next chapter they'll set that law on the shelf as they introduce evolution and basically say, “Well, yes, we know it can't happen, but we believe it must have anyway.” Now who is the one with “blind faith?”

Mendal's Laws of Genetics would also have to be broken by evolution. These laws say that variations within each kind of life are huge, but have definite limits. In other words, you can have big dogs and little dogs and fluffy dogs and short hair dogs, but you can never have a dog turning into a cat. You never get a “dat” or a “cog.” Cats are cats and dogs are dogs and never the twain shall meet. See, evolutionists show our modern day variations of cows and dogs and cats and birds and say, “That's evolution.” But it's not. It's just change within the existing limits of that creature's DNA. With artificial selection (breeding) we can create lots of change. Natural selection creates some change as well (beak sizes of finches and so on). But the extent of the change is limited to the DNA each creature has to work with.

What God originally created in the garden were not Holsteins and poodles and “white” people. Adam and Eve could not have been “white” because then they would not have had the DNA to produce

dark-skinned people. They had to be a middle-brown to be able to produce all the different shades of color that we see in people today. The same holds true for all of God's creation. All of it was created with a vast potential for different genetic variations. Those changes do not in any way represent molecules-to-man evolution. Mendel showed that the genetic variations can be great, but can only go so far. So, for instance, Noah would not have needed to bring all the different types of cattle and cats and dogs, etc. That we have today with him on the ark. The two of each "kind" were sufficient to generate all the animals and variations we see today, although many have since become extinct.

The Fossil Record Shows No Missing Links

None. Links between monkeys and man have all fallen apart. Piltdown man was a fraud. Nebraska man turned out to be a single pig's tooth. Cro-Magnon man was from a tribe in East Asia and Neanderthal man was from a tribe in France. Lucy is just an ape, and so it goes. Every new "missing link" turns out to be either a monkey or a man, or a deliberate hoax. It's the same with supposed missing links in other species. They all end up being their own unique animal kind not one organism changing into something else. The fact is that all of the layers of rock and the fossils within them (including marine fossils on every major mountain range) fit perfectly with a catastrophic world-wide flood about 4,000 years ago, not millions of years ago. What the fossil record shows is "billions of dead things buried in rock layers laid down by water all over the earth."

The Of Life Cannot Be Explained By An Accidental Origin

Design shouts out for a Designer. A mousetrap has essentially five different parts. It's a pretty simple machine that does what it was designed to do and does it pretty well (unless you have a real crafty mouse). If you take away one of these parts the mousetrap doesn't become 1/5 as efficient, or even half as efficient. It's broken. It won't work at all. Of course, it's much more complex even than that. All the parts have to be just the right size, they all have to be placed in relationship to each other and stapled to the platform. Well, this simple machine cannot be compared to the vast complexity of each cell in an organism. For instance, there are hundreds of tiny molecular machines that let cells move, reproduce, process food and so on. Take away any of them and the whole organism will cease to function.

In fact, I doubt very much that Darwin would have come up with the theory of evolution if he would have had a better microscope. In Darwin's day, evolutionary biologist Ernst Haeckel talked about the cell as a "homogeneous globule of plasm." To Haeckel, a living cell seemed no more complex than a blob of Jell-O. Now we know better. Darwin's microscope was capable of magnifying things about 100x. Not bad for its day. Today, the Titan 80-300, a multi-million dollar microscope is capable of magnifying objects by 30 million times, and can see all the way down to the individual atom. So we now know that the cell is vastly more complex than anything we could have ever imagined. Just to give you an example, a single gram of dried DNA can hold as much information as a trillion CD's.

Biochemist Michael Behe, in his classic book "Darwin's Black Box" says: "The conclusion of intelligent design flows naturally from the data itself - not from sacred books or sectarian beliefs....The reluctance of science to embrace the conclusion of intelligent design....Has no justifiable foundation....Many people, including many important and well-respected scientists, just don't want there to be anything beyond nature."

Just look once, really look at the complexity of life. Take the life cycle of the butterfly from an egg to a caterpillar to a cocoon to the flying butterfly. During every stage its appearance changes drastically and it leads a completely different kind of life. It takes a three or four generational cycle for the Monarch to fly from Mexico to the United States, then it migrates back over a 3,000 mile journey to within 100 feet of the place his grandfather or great-grandfather spent the winter. Trout swim upstream, swallows fly 7,000 miles without a chart, compass or radio beam and land to build their nest in the same garage they left six months before. Evolution has no answer to that kind of complexity. But God does.

Take the eye for example (not to mention all the other organs and systems of the body). Charles Darwin said of the eye: “The belief that an organ as perfect as the eye could have formed by natural selection is more than enough to stagger anyone.” The more scientists study the eye, the more staggeringly complex it gets. In fact, the eye is just one of many examples of an organ that “irreducibly complex.” If the retina, the optic nerve, the cornea, or any of the more than two million other parts were removed (including the tear generation system, incredibly complex in itself) total blindness would result. To imagine that system could evolve slowly, one useless piece at a time until a functional eye is developed takes an incredible amount of “blind faith” (pun intended).

To learn more, consider going to AnswersinGenesis.org.